



# Bitterroot National Forest

1801 N. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Hamilton, MT 59840 (406) 363-7100

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Nan Christianson**  
**Acting Public Affairs Officer**  
**(406) 363-7113**

### **Bitterroot National Forest Announces Selection of New Forest Fire Management Officer (FMO)**

**HAMILTON, MT; JUNE 29, 2007.** --- Acting Forest Supervisor Barry Paulson recently announced the selection of Rick Floch as the Bitterroot National Forest's new Fire Management Officer (FMO).

Floch began his career with the Forest Service on a fire lookout in Oregon in 1970. He worked in fire and timber programs throughout Oregon and Washington then moved to the Bitterroot National Forest in 1993. He has been the Forest's Assistant Fire Management Officer since 2003. In addition to his responsibilities on the Bitterroot NF, Floch also serves as an Operations Section Chief on the Northern Rockies Type I Incident Command Team. Floch is pleased with his new assignment, explaining "I have long respected the caliber of people working in fire management on the Forest and in our County's Volunteer Fire Departments. I look forward to working with them during the upcoming fire season, and in efforts to further improve our preparedness for future years."

Previous Bitterroot NF FMO Jack Kirkendall has accepted a new position working for the national Fire Staff Group but will remain stationed here in the Bitterroot. Prior to starting his new responsibilities, Jack was awarded a prestigious national award, the 2006 Paul Gleason Award, in recognition of his innovative leadership. "The cool thing about this whole deal is

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**Ravalli County Commissioners**

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the affirmation that giving folks I've worked with the opportunity, as I have had, to learn and to lead fosters an innovative leadership environment," explained Kirkendall.

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**NOTE TO MEDIA:** Rick Floch will host a media briefing to explain current and projected wildfire conditions on the Bitterroot National Forest. The meeting will be held at the Forest Dispatch Center at the Ravalli County airport on Tuesday, July 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00.

The airport is located just off the East Side Highway. Best way to get there is to drive in to Hamilton on Highway 93 and turn east at the 1<sup>st</sup> traffic light onto Fairgrounds Road. That road will come to a "T" on East Side Highway. Turn right, or south then almost immediately turn left or east on Airport Road. Take first left after you pass the Trap Club and follow road to north. There should be signs as well, directing you to Forest Service dispatch center. Call Nan Christanson at 363-7113 if you plan to attend, and at 531-1130 if you have any trouble finding the Dispatch Center.